

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are pending. Claim 5 has been cancelled.
Claim 1 has been amended. No new matter has been added.

Specification

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action objects to the disclosure due to informalities. The first paragraph of the specification has been amended to recite "among" instead of "amongst." A paragraph that starts on page 11 line 10 has also been amended to delete the reference number 336. Therefore, Applicant believes that these objections have been addressed.

102 Rejections**Claims 1-4**

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent no. 5,729,897 by Schmidt et al (referred to hereinafter as "Schmidt"). The Applicant has reviewed the cited reference and respectfully submits that the present invention as recited in the amended independent Claim 1 is not taught or suggested by Schmidt.

Amended Independent Claim 1 recites,
"A flexible circuit, comprising:

a substrate having at least one opening;
an electrical conductor bonded to a first
surface of said substrate;
a first cover layer bonded to said first
surface of said substrate and to said electrical
conductor; and
a second cover layer bonded to a second
surface of said substrate and to said first

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cover layer through said at least one opening, wherein said at least one opening is located in an environmentally stressed region.

Applicant respectfully agrees with the Office Action's statement in paragraph 7 that Schmidt does not teach "wherein said at least one opening is located in an environmentally stressed region," as recited by amended independent Claim 1.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully believes that Claim 1 overcomes the rejection on the basis of Schmidt.

Claims 2-4 depend on Claim 1 and include additional limitations which further make these dependent claims patentable. Therefore, Applicants believe that Claims 2-4 also overcome the rejection on the basis of Schmidt.

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Claim 5

In paragraph 7 of the Office Action, Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schmidt in view of U.S. patent 6,617,518 by Ames et al. (referred to hereinafter as "Ames"). The Applicant has reviewed the cited references and respectfully submits that embodiments of the present invention are not taught or suggested by Schmidt or Ames, alone or in combination.

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Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation that used to be in Claim 5. In view of this, Claim 5 has been cancelled.

As already stated, Schmidt does not teach or suggest "wherein said at least one opening is located in an environmentally stressed region," as recited by amended independent Claim 1. In fact the Office Action states that Schmidt does not teach "wherein said at least one opening is located in an environmentally stressed region." The Office Action states in paragraph 7 that Schmidt teaches "wherein said at least one opening is located in an environmentally stressed region" at Col. 6, lines 59-65, col. 7 lines 19-23, Col. 3 lines 22-26, and Col. 4 lines 15-25.

Although Ames states that at Col. 5 lines 15-25 that "...flap opening formed in the flex cable also helps to allow the flex cable to be bent into its desired shape" Ames does not teach or suggest anywhere the use of an opening located in an environmentally stressed region. Therefore, even if Schmidt and Ames could be combined, the combination would not reach the embodiment recited by Claim 1.

Conclusions

In light of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejected claims.

Based on the arguments presented above, Applicant respectfully asserts that Claims 1-4 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicant respectfully solicits allowance of these claims.

Applicant has reviewed the references cited but not relied upon and respectfully submit that these references neither teach nor suggest the claimed limitations.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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